DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 077 967 TM 002 776

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TITLE Reading Instructional Packets - RIP; Reading Activities Packets - RAP.
PUB DATE 73
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at annual meeting of American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, Louisiana, February 25-March 1, 1973)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Grades; *Grading; *Individualized Instruction; *Individualized Reading; Reading Diagnosis; Reading Instruction; Remedial Reading; Speeches

ABSTRACT

A description of the use of the Reading Instructional Packets and the Reading Activities Packets, a program for individualized reading instruction designed for use by students grouped on level of reading achievement rather than grade level, is given. The time allowed for each packet should depend on the materials to be presented, student responses, and necessary activities for effective presentation. An argument is made for using number grades without conversion to letter grades, or with a universal conversion range, and for repeating work in an individualized instructional program until the student attains the specific objective. (KM)

ED 077967

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Reading Instructional Packets - RIP
Reading Activities Packets - RAP

by C. M. Knight

Students should be grouped to receive instructions according to tested results and as the result of achievement scores, regardless of age, size, grade placement, sex, race, or any other method of grouping. Students in the same school should be grouped with other students achieving on the same level, regardless of grade placement.

The Reading Instructional Packet and Reading Activities Packet should be designed to be used in all schools. Students should be tested first to determine their grade level of achievement, or school attendance level of achievement, such as 4.7 - fourth year, seventh month.

The Instructional Packets and Activities Packets would have measurable objectives stated for each packet. The packet would be designed to effectively present the materials and lessons to a student who is achieving on a certain level.

The o jectives would be planned in order to prepare a student to achieve or otherwise show proficiency in order to make a certain score on the achievement test being used.

For example, if a remedial reading program is planned, the criteria used for testing students to determine their grade level will be reviewed. Based on the achievement or proficiency in certain activities which are measured, the Reading Instructional Packet and Reading Activities Packet would be planned. The packets will contain stated, measurable objectives, a list of materials and methods of presentation, and student reading activities, response booklets, drills, games, and responses for students to complete.

Students who are tested and determined to be reading or achieving on a certain grade level, for example 4.7(fourth grade, seventh month) would receive instructions from Reading Instructional Packet 4.8 and Reading Activities Packet 4.8 - or materials planned to present materials and skills necessary to score 4.8 on the Reading Achievement Test used.

If a student should fail to accomplish the desired objectives and fail to master the desired skills to score 4.8 on the test, or otherwise fail to indicate an understanding of the materials, then he would be given an alternate presentation of materials and activities planned to meet the same objectives.

Each Reading Instructional Packet and Reading Activities Packet would be designed to be presented in a specific block of time, to be determined by the materials to be presented, the student responses, drills, or activities deemed necessary in order to effectively present all the materials and practice necessary for the student to know or exhibit proficiency in

Students should be re-tested, preferably after each presentation of a Reading Instructional and Activities Packet, to determine whether or not the presentation was effective in his case.

We can not hope to have a majority of students with a wide range of abilities, sitting in the same classroom to achieve the desired results equally. However, if all the students in a class are achieving on grade level 4.7 and are presented materials planned to meet objectives for students to read on grade level 4.8, then there should be a higher percentage of success for both students and teachers.

As professional educators, we should be ashamed to admit that materials and lessons planned for students who achieve on grade 6.8 level are presented to students who achieve on a 4.2 grade level.

It is the opinion of many teachers that the use of letters such as A, B, C, D, and F for grades is inadequate when the range is similar to

A = 91-100
B = 81-90
C = 71-80
D = 61-70
F = below 60

Their reason is that when you use the letter grades to average to get the average grade for a 6 week, 9 week, or semester, it makes it difficult if you have more than one grade to consider.

For example, does the A represent 91 or 99. When averaged with a B of 81 or 89, you could have an average of either A or B, or 86 or 94, depending upon which representative number grade the letter grade represents.

If you are using number grades, why bother to change them to letter grades at all, why not just keep the number grades throughout.

If there are some die-hards who insist on a letter grade, then have an equivalency that is <u>universal</u> or nationwide and let the person who insists on a letter grade make his own conversions.

A number grade is often, if not always, figured on a percentage grade basis. Although a letter grade can be figured on a percentage basis, there is still a discrepancy if the letter grade represents a range of only two numbers. For example, if A+ is = to 96-100, then the student could have any of the grades from 96, 97, 98, 99, or 100.

Letter grades might be useful for a teacher who finds that she must curve the grades in order for a certain percent of the students to pass, as for example when all but one or two students fail to make a passing grade. However, this

in itself would seem to indicate one of several things - inadequate preparation on the part of the teacher, material too difficult for the students to learn, inadequate preparation by both teacher and students for the test, lack of interest on the part of the students, and even lack of interest on the part of the teacher.

On the matter of grading, it is my opinion that grading is unnecessary. The program of studies should be planned with a measurable objective. When this objective is attained, the student goes on to the next project or area of the program. Grades, either letter, number, or grades for classes such as First Grade, Second Grade, Third Grade, etc., would no longer be used as a basis of promotion. The over-all yearly or semester or quarterly objective should be broken down on a monthly, weekly, or daily lesson basis.

For example, the objective for a group of youngsters is to learn to add the 100 addition facts. The student is to be able to add these 100 facts correctly in a definite period of time.

In a plan of individual program of instruction, the student would not "pass" this objective until he completes or masters the work or attains the objective.

If the student is unable to accomplish the required objective after the first group of presentations and lessons, then a second approach, or a different method of presentation should be used.

For example, the first method of presentation may use a blackboard and teacher explanation. The students are then given work to reinforce this learning, then tested to see if they have attained the objective. If the student

successfully attains the objective, he then goes on to the next objective, which may be to learn to answer the 100 subtraction facts correctly in a specified unit of time. However, if a student fails to pass the work, or fails to reach the required objective, he is given a second presentation of the same factual information, using a different approach. He may receive a presentation which is entirely verbal, he may be shown a filmstrip, a movie, or given objects to manipulate in order to aid in learning. As many different presentations as are necessary to facilitate learning should be planned and utilized in order to adequately present the material so that the student can learn.

If, after utilizing all the means of presentation available, the student is unable to attain the objective, then the process should be repeated. If the student is unable to reach the desired objective after two complete batteries of presentations, then the student should be tested or checked to find if there is a physical or psychological reason for his inability to learn.

A child should not be allowed to go on to the next objective or next step until he has mastered the first or initial objective.

If the student is slow to learn, and after several years it is found that he is with a group of children who are much younger (chronologically) than he is, then he should be placed with a group his own age (approximately). His program of instruction should still have the same objective, but the method of presentation may be onanother plane.

If this method were utilized from the time a student

entered school, we might still have students in our junior high schools and high schools who are unable to read, write, spell, or "cipher"(add, subtract, multiply and divide simple numbers) but they would not be in the same groups to learn with students who are reading on a 7th, 10th, or college level, writing themes using three, four, and five syllable words, learning to calculate algebraic equations, and learning foreign languages, etc.

In our method of grading, if a student makes a grade of 59½, does he pass or fail? Could we have a series of presentations, and require that the student asnwer correctly a higher percent of questions than 59% in order to pass?

How can you measure understanding? and the ability to reason? Suppose a student can not write the answers to the 100 addition facts, but he can tell you the answers, or if he cannot understand the problem by looking at a printed page, but can understand if you ask him directly. Is it possible for a student to understand orally and verbally, yet be unable to read from the written page? SHould he be penalized, or shouldhe be helped to learn to read? How can you justify passing him when he will need the ability to read and understand when he gets to a higher math?

In individualized program of instruction, those students who are able to learn a certain way (orally, verbally, or if they show proficiency in these areas, and deficiency in others,) could be considered students with specific learning disabilities, and a special program of studies should be planned for them.